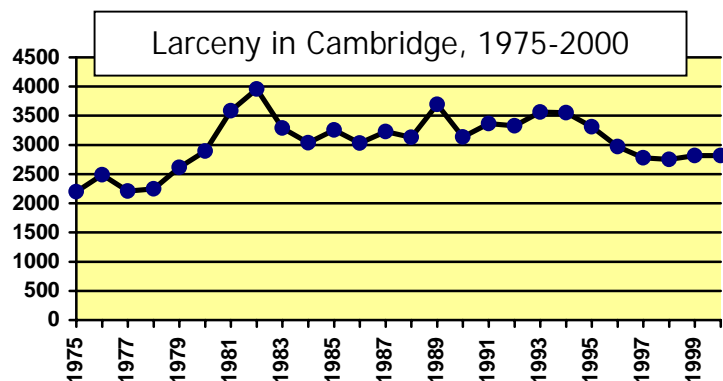


Larceny

2819 in 1999 • 2820 in 2000 • No Change



Larceny is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket-picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, "con" games, forgery, and worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

Larceny is the most commonly reported Part I crime, accounting for 64% of the Part I crime total. However, it is probably also one of the most underreported crimes. Many victims of larceny—especially if the dollar amount is low—simply don't bother to call the police when a theft occurs. In addition, high portions of shoplifting incidents are not seen and are thus not reported.

Within the next decade, we can probably expect larceny to continue to increase and to produce the most patterns. Certain items of property—cellular telephones, laptop computers, and other electronics—will drive the larceny rate. These items—easy to steal, easy to conceal, and easy to sell—provide attractive targets for thieves looking for profit without the danger and potential legal penalties inherent in robbery and burglary.

Larceny is broken into nine sub-categories, four of which reported increases in 2000. Most notable is the increase in larcenies from person. This is mainly attributed to the on-going pattern of larcenies from diners.

Categorization	1999	2000	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	598	610	+2%
Larcenies from MVs	744	653	-12%
Larcenies of Bicycles	321	360	+12%
Larcenies from Persons	291	375	+29%
Shoplifting	406	373	-8%
Larcenies of Services	23	18	-22%
Larcenies from Residences	219	215	-2%
Larcenies of License Plates	148	137	-7%
Other (Misc.) Larcenies	69	79	+14%
Total	2819	2820	+0%

Larcenies from Buildings

Larcenies from buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. "Non-burglary"

means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

Larcenies from buildings promise to be a major crime concern in the next few years, as businesses in the area of Kendall Square continue to report thefts of laptop computers at an alarming rate.

Larcenies from buildings are further sub-divided into 15 categories:

Type	2000 Total	% Of Total
Company property from offices	137	22%
Personal property from offices	108	18%
Property from School Classrooms	39	6%
Property left on Store Counters	39	6%
Property Unattended in Bars/Restaurants	13	2%
Property Unattended in Misc. Locations	51	8%
Employee Property in Back Rooms of Stores	25	4%
Property "Forgotten" in Restrooms & Other Locations	46	8%
Property Left in Health Club Lockers	38	6%
Property Left in Hotel Rooms	30	5%
Cash Missing from Store Safes	31	5%
Property Stolen from Construction Sites	31	5%
Items such as signs and plants outside of retail establishments	9	2%
Vending Machines	4	1%
Other/Misc.	9	2%

About 70% of the larcenies of company property from offices involve the theft of laptop computers. We expect that laptops will continue to be one of the hottest theft targets over the next decade.

Thefts of personal property from offices most often involve the larceny of a wallet or purse from the victim's desk.

A high percentage—at least two-thirds and possibly as high as 80%—of all thefts from buildings can be attributed to employees, security guards, or cleaning staff—in other words, people who have access to the area from which the item was stolen. The remainder are the work of thieves who sneak into the building during opening, closing, or lunch hours—often posing as delivery personnel.

There are few trends among the other larceny categories: most are crimes of opportunity, not crimes that a thief deliberately sets out to commit. One exception is larcenies from health club lockers, which is a continual problem at four establishments in the city. Both locked and unlocked lockers are entered and burglarized for watches, wallets, jewelry, and other property while the owner works out.

Geographic Breakdown of Larcenies from Buildings

Business District	1999	2000	Change
Galleria/East Camb.	98	117	+19%
Kendall Square/MIT	88	114	+30%
Inman Square	34	40	+18%
Central Square	113	73	-35%
Camb.port/Riverside	30	29	-3%
Bay Square/Broadway	35	42	+2%
Harvard Square	77	73	-5%
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	33	31	-6%
Porter Square	26	30	+15%
Alewife/West Camb.	64	59	-8%

The major decrease this year in larcenies from buildings was reported in the Central Square business district. This can be attributed to the unexpected lead Central Square took for larcenies from buildings in 1999. High numbers last year were attributed to health club larcenies from the YMCA, an on-going problem in one office building in the 600 block of Massachusetts Avenue, and almost a dozen thefts from schools.

Most of the laptop theft action occurs in the Galleria and Kendall Square districts, where technology firms report thefts at an alarming rate. Again, most of these thefts are attributed to security, cleaning, maintenance or other staff who have full access to the building; many occur overnight or on weekends. Buildings on Main Street, Rogers Street, Memorial Drive, and Cambridge Center have been hit multiple times each.

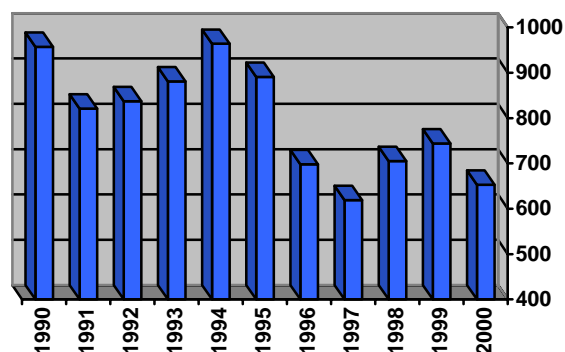
Inman Square reported the third largest increase in incidents this year. 20% of the incidents reported in this business district occurred at Cambridge City Hospital. Three of the incidents were thefts from

areas of the hospital under construction. The remaining incidents involved the theft of employee's belongings from their workstations.

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires and hubcaps) from an automobile. It is the second most commonly reported crime in Cambridge.

Larceny from Motor Vehicles, 1990-2000



After a small increase in 1998 and 1999, larcenies from motor vehicles are again on their way down. Being relatively quick and simple to commit, and yet potentially very rewarding, larceny from a motor vehicle is a favorite crime for the unskilled sector of the criminal workforce. It is committed frequently by homeless and juvenile offenders, often in sprees of five or six incidents a night.

The most popular targets are, in order, car stereos and CD players, cellular telephones, wallets and cash, CDs and tapes, and laptop computers; all easily fenced items.

About 80 percent of larcenies from motor vehicles are accomplished by breaking into the car—usually by smashing a window or by prying the door lock.

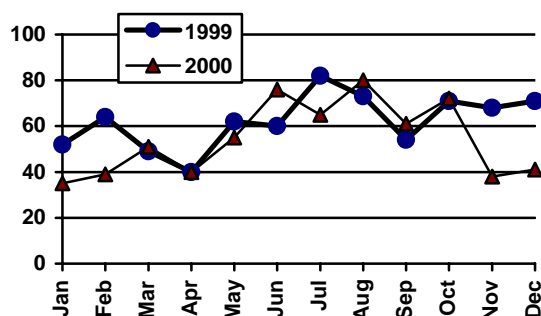
In 2000, Area 4 was the neighborhood with the highest number of larcenies from motor vehicles. Area 4 suffered from an on-going larceny from MV pattern all year long. This pattern is highly concentrated on weekends between 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. In most instances, the windows of the vehicle are smashed and easily removable items are stolen.

Geographic Breakdown of Larcenies from Motor Vehicles

Neighborhood	1999	2000	Change
East Cambridge	115	93	-19%
MIT	28	27	-4%
Inman/Harrington	35	25	-29%
Area 4	71	133	+87%
Cambridgeport	99	88	-11%
Mid-Cambridge	99	56	-43%
Riverside	55	25	-55%
Agassiz	44	19	-57%
Peabody	56	52	-7%
West Cambridge	56	61	+9%
North Cambridge	49	43	-12%
Cambridge Highlands	19	19	N.C.
Strawberry Hill	15	12	-20%

East Cambridge followed Area 4 in total incidents reported. For the first two weeks of September, the East Cambridge neighborhood became a hotspot for larcenies from motor vehicles. Incidents are most likely to occur between 8:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. between Tuesdays and Thursdays. Entry was gained by smashing the window and cell phones, CDs, and stereos were targeted.

Many other neighborhoods, such as the Mid-Cambridge, Riverside, and Agassiz neighborhoods experienced a significant decrease in the number of larcenies from motor vehicles reported this year. The pattern of larcenies from motor vehicles parked in residential parking garages in Mid-Cambridge did not return this year.



The Cambridge Police Department arrested 11 people—9 men and two women—for larcenies from motor vehicles in 2000. Ages ranged from 18 to 44. None of the arrestees were juveniles.

One of the people arrested was homeless. 6 were from Cambridge (two from Mid-Cambridge, and one each from East Cambridge, Area 4, and Cambridgeport), two from Dorchester, and one each from Roxbury, Hyde Park, and Somerville.

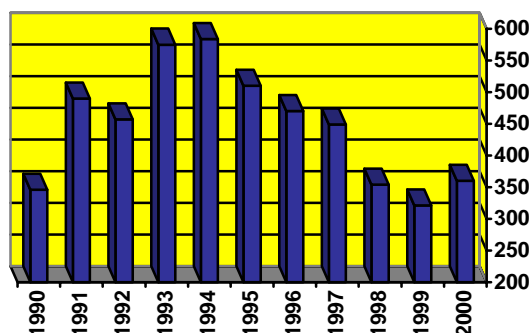
Top Larceny from Motor Vehicle Hot Spots

- CambridgeSide Galleria Garage (East Cambridge): 11 incidents
- Bishop Allen Drive & Norfolk Street (Area 4): 9 incidents
- Essex Street & Mass Avenue (Area 4): 8 incidents
- 362/364 Rindge Avenue parking lot (North Cambridge): 6 incidents
- Essex Street & Bishop Allen Drive (Area 4): 6 incidents
- 41 Mooney Street (Highlands): 5 incidents
- Windsor Street & Main Street (Area 4): 5 incidents
- Windsor Street & School Street (Area 4): 5 incidents.

Larcenies of Bicycles

For the first time in six years, Cambridge reported an increase in larcenies of bicycles. Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 575 in 1993. The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported on MIT or Harvard University property. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the total.

Bicycle Larceny, 1990-2000

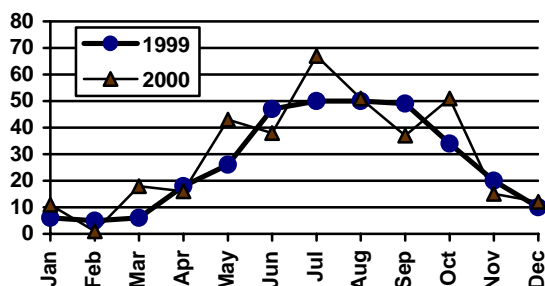


In 1999, larcenies of bicycles gradually increased toward a plateau during the summer months. This was distinct from earlier years where the summer months were marked by sharp increases in this crime.

The year 2000 was marked with a strange pattern of sharp increases and decreases throughout the year. The surges became more significant as the summer months approached, and became less significant as the year ended.

This year's increase reversed a couple of interesting shifts in the character of this crime that have been reported in the late 1990s:

1. In 1996, about 70% of stolen bicycles were stolen from the street—from meters, signs, and bike racks, locked or unlocked. The other 30% were stolen from residential areas such as back yards, front porches, apartment building basements, and garages. In 1997, this ratio changed to about 50% “street” thefts and 50% “residential” thefts. Finally, in 1998 and 1999, it was inverted from 1996, with about 60% occurring from residential areas. In other words, bicycle theft began moving away from an unprotected, street environment to protected, residential areas where the bicycles’ owners believe the bicycles to be safe. This year bicycle thefts have tipped the scale again towards unprotected “street” thefts.
2. The traditional summertime peak has been blunted in recent years, but has returned this year with an enormous surge in activity in July. 65% of the bicycle thefts reported occurred between May and September.



3. The usual clusters in Harvard Square, Porter Square, and Central Square nearly evaporated in 1998 and 1999 and continued to stay low in 2000. In the early to mid-1990s, Harvard Square had the highest concentration in the city, with 70-100 thefts over any given summer. Instead of plaguing the commercial squares, bicycle theft clusters moved to the residential.

Geographic Breakdown of Bicycle Theft

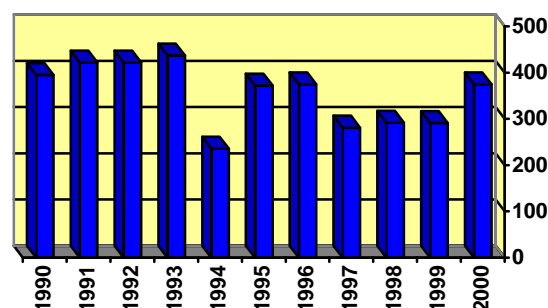
Neighborhood	1999	2000	Change
East Cambridge	30	24	-20%
MIT	15	15	N.C.
Inman/Harrington	20	26	+30%
Area 4	31	34	+10%
Cambridgeport	38	43	+13%
Mid-Cambridge	48	53	+10%
Riverside	34	42	+24%
Agassiz	15	18	+20%
Peabody	26	17	-35%
West Cambridge	32	35	+9%
North Cambridge	23	40	+74%
Cambridge Highlands	5	2	-60%
Strawberry Hill	4	11	+175%

Larcenies from the Person

Larceny from the Person describes pocket-picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and usually the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a robbery.

Larcenies from persons increased between 1999 and 2000 from 291 to 375.

Larceny from the Person, 1990-2000



Three recurring scenarios dominate larcenies from persons:

1. **Larcenies of Diners' Property** (180). In the typical occurrence of this crime, a female diner places her purse under her chair, beside her chair, or slung over the back of her chair. During the meal, someone creeps up from behind and lifts the wallet from the purse, or takes the purse entirely. Men are sometimes victimized, with wallets taken from coats hung over the backs of chairs. Half of this type of larceny occurred in Harvard Square restaurants. Usually, the crime happens at dinnertime, between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., but diners at coffee shops are often victimized during the lunch hour. Usually, Harvard Square experiences four to six solid patterns a year that feature these characteristics. Central Square occasionally reports patterns of this crime, and there are a few scattered incidents at the Food Court at the CambridgeSide Galleria.
2. **Pocketpicking** (43). While a victim walks through a public place, a crafty pickpocket (“dipper”) stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables—with wallets and cellular telephones the most common targets. Harvard Square and Central Square report the highest pocketpicking numbers, with the concentration between noon and 4:00 p.m.
3. **Distracted Shoppers** (65). A shopper puts a bag of merchandise or a purse by his or her feet

While browsing through a store. Moments later, it is gone. Often, the theft occurs from a shopping cart in a grocery store. The highest concentrations are at the CambridgeSide Galleria, Central Square, and Harvard Square.

A fourth categorization—theft from moviegoers—reported 23 incidents in 2000. Eight of them were from patrons at the Fresh Pond Mall cinema and seven of them were from patrons of the Kendall Square Theater.

Geographic Breakdown of Larcenies from Persons

Business District	1999	2000	Change
Galleria/East Camb.	42	52	+24%
Kendall Square/MIT	7	24	+242%
Inman Square	4	11	+175%
Central Square	63	67	+6%
Camb.port/Riverside	2	5	+150%
Bay Square/Broadway	1	14	+1300%
Harvard Square	124	137	+10%
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	12	9	-25%
Porter Square	11	24	+118%
Alewife/West Camb.	21	26	+24%
Unknown	4	6	+50%

The geographic breakdown shows that the Harvard Square, Central Square, and Galleria districts overwhelmingly dominate this crime. Harvard Square reports nearly double the number of Central Square—most of them larcenies of diners' property.

Shoplifting

Shoplifting incidents held roughly even between 1999 and 2000, decreasing only 9%. 36% of all shoplifting incidents occur at the CambridgeSide Galleria. Harvard Square makes up the majority of the remainder.

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters** who steal on a dare, to impress their peers, to get an "adrenaline rush," or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters** who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the "impulse" is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see "Shop Owner/Patron" assaults in the Assault section).

4. **Kleptomaniacs** who steal to satisfy a psychological need.

5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or "flea markets."

Since shoplifting incidents are most often reported only when an arrest is made, an increase in shoplifting may be viewed positively: more thieves are being caught. On the other hand, since the vast majority of shoplifting incidents are unseen and go unknown until the store checks its inventory, underreporting of shoplifting is a serious problem. The actual shoplifting number may be four to seven times the statistic given in this report.

Geographic Breakdown of Shoplifting

Business District	1999	2000	% Change
Galleria/East Camb.	165	136	-18%
Kendall Square/MIT	2	4	+100%
Inman Square	7	11	+57%
Central Square	58	45	-22%
Camb.port/Riverside	9	18	+100%
Bay Square/Broadway	3	5	+67%
Harvard Square	86	81	-6%
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	8	12	+50%
Porter Square	35	24	-31%
Alewife/West Camb.	33	37	+12%

Again, the business districts of the Galleria, Harvard Square, and Central Square dominate the shoplifting totals.

Police made 227 arrests for shoplifting in 2000—134 males and 93 females. Ages ranged from 12 to 55, with an average age of 22. 58 of those arrested were juveniles. 83 arrested shoplifters were from Boston, 43 from Cambridge, and 17 from Somerville. 17 were homeless. The remaining arrestees were from neighboring cities. The CambridgeSide Galleria swarms with juveniles from Boston, and most of those arrested for shoplifting at the Galleria fit this profile.

Larceny from Residences

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, and yards. "Non-burglary" means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft: people who have the right to be on the property commit the thefts. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed from common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed from property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed. Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by

Someone who knows the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. This crime decreased two percent from 1999. One pattern to watch involves the theft of mail and packages delivered by parcel services.

The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- Thefts committed by visitors or guests to a residence: 24%
- Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 16%. Some common items targeted are lawn & garden equipment, flowers and fauna, decorations, and children's toys.
- Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., "domestic thefts"): 12%
- Thefts committed by someone working in the apartment, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance man: 11%
- Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or storage area of an apartment building: 9%
- Thefts of mail or packages delivered by a parcel service: 6%

Patterns of larcenies from residences are extremely rare; they are often committed by neighbors or other people living in the victim's apartment building.

Geographic Breakdown of
Larcenies from Residences

Neighborhood	1999	2000	Change
East Cambridge	19	19	N.C.
MIT	0	1	Incal.
Inman/Harrington	19	16	-16%
Area 4	27	33	+22%
Cambridgeport	35	35	N.C.
Mid-Cambridge	31	31	N.C.
Riverside	17	14	-2%
Agassiz	12	5	-58%
Peabody	19	27	+42%
West Cambridge	19	14	-26%
North Cambridge	18	14	-28%
Cambridge Highlands	1	2	+100%
Strawberry Hill	2	4	+100%

Larceny of Services

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, "dining and ditching," "gassing and going," and other failures to pay for services already rendered.

2000 occurrences broke down as follows:

- 50% theft of gasoline
- 22% drove out of a parking garage without paying.
- 11% "dining & ditching" (i.e., running out of a restaurant without paying for the check)
- 17% miscellaneous

The miscellaneous larcenies of services included a cab fare evasion, a man who "stole" his own car from an auto repair garage without paying his bill, and a man who fled a hotel without paying.

Larcenies of License Plates

A crime related to Larcenies from Motor Vehicles is the self-explanatory Larcenies of License Plates, which decreased 7 percent between 1999 and 2000. Stolen plates are often used to replace license plates on stolen automobiles of the same make and model, or to give a plate to an unregistered motor vehicle. Since the theft of a license plate is often unnoticed and unreported for several weeks, the thief's stolen or unregistered car is somewhat protected from detection during that time.

However, new computer technologies which allow patrol officers to quickly check the status of a license plate (and what car it belongs to) are making this crime risky for thieves, thus lowering the rate.

Geographic Breakdown of
License Plate Larcenies

Neighborhood	1999	2000	Change
East Cambridge	16	11	-31%
MIT	0	5	Incal.
Inman/Harrington	13	13	N.C.
Area 4	21	22	+5%
Cambridgeport	14	20	+43%
Mid-Cambridge	9	7	-22%
Riverside	11	6	-45%
Agassiz	6	6	N.C.
Peabody	13	11	-15%
West Cambridge	5	7	+40%
North Cambridge	12	13	+8%
Cambridge Highlands	3	1	-67%
Strawberry Hill	2	1	-100%
Unknown	23	14	-39%

It should be noted that many plates reported stolen simply fell off the vehicle, but when in doubt, the loss is recorded as a larceny.